USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Contractor and Cooperator Report No. 13

October 2005

State-Level Predictors of Food Insecurity and Hunger Among Households With Children

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Abstract

This report examines interstate variation in household food security. Using hierarchical modeling, we identify several contextual dimensions that appear linked to household food security: the availability and accessibility of Federal nutrition assistance programs, policies affecting economic well-being of low-income families, and States' economic and social characteristics. These dimensions comprise what we refer to as the State food security infrastructure. We find that a strong food security infrastructure particularly benefits families that are economically vulnerable yet have incomes above the poverty line. Almost all of the observed interstate differences in food security can be explained by cross-State differences in demographic and contextual characteristics.

Acknowledgments

Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program

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